



Billing Code 4333–15

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[Docket No. FWS–HQ–IA–2016–0098]

[FXIA16710900000–156–FF09A30000]

Endangered Species; Marine Mammals; Receipt of Applications for Permit

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of applications for permit.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, invite the public to comment on the following applications to conduct certain activities with endangered species, marine mammals, or both. With some exceptions, the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) prohibit activities with listed species unless Federal authorization is acquired that allows such activities.

DATES: We must receive comments or requests for documents on or before **[INSERT**

DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL

REGISTER]. We must receive requests for marine mammal permit public hearings,

in writing, at the address shown in the **ADDRESSES** section by **[INSERT DATE 30**

DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: *Submitting Comments:* You may submit comments by one of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments on **Docket No. FWS–HQ–IA–2016–0098**.
- *U.S. mail or hand-delivery:* Public Comments Processing, Attn: **Docket No.**

FWS–HQ–IA–2016–0098; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Headquarters, MS:
BPHC; 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041–3803.

When submitting comments, please indicate the **name of the applicant and the PRT#** you are commenting on. We will post all comments on <http://www.regulations.gov>. This generally means that we will post any personal information you provide us (see the **Public Comments** section below for more information).

Viewing Comments: Comments and materials we receive will be available for public inspection on <http://www.regulations.gov>, or by appointment, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays, at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Management Authority, 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041–3803; telephone 703–358–2095.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Brenda Tapia, (703) 358-2104 (telephone); (703) 358-2281 (fax); DMAFR@fws.gov (email).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Public Comment Procedures

A. How Do I Request Copies of Applications or Comment on Submitted Applications?

Send your request for copies of applications or comments and materials concerning any of the applications to the contact listed under **ADDRESSES**. Please include the **Federal Register** notice publication date, the PRT-number, and the name of the applicant in your request or submission. We will not consider requests or comments sent to an email or address not listed under **ADDRESSES**. If you provide an email address in your request for copies of applications, we will attempt to respond to your request electronically.

Please make your requests or comments as specific as possible. Please confine your comments to issues for which we seek comments in this notice, and explain the basis for your comments. Include sufficient information with your comments to allow us to authenticate any scientific or commercial data you include.

The comments and recommendations that will be most useful and likely to influence agency decisions are: (1) Those supported by quantitative information or studies; and (2) Those that include citations to, and analyses of, the applicable laws and regulations. We will not consider or include in our administrative record comments we receive after the close of the comment period (see **DATES**) or comments delivered to an address other than those listed above (see **ADDRESSES**).

B. May I Review Comments Submitted by Others?

Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the street address listed under **ADDRESSES**. The public may review documents and other information applicants have sent in support of the application unless our allowing viewing would violate the Privacy Act or Freedom of Information Act. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

II. Background

To help us carry out our conservation responsibilities for affected species, and in consideration of section 10(a)(1)(A) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), and the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), along with Executive Order 13576, “Delivering an Efficient, Effective, and Accountable Government,” and the President’s Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies of January 21, 2009 - Transparency and Open Government (74 FR 4685; January 26, 2009), which call on all Federal agencies to promote openness and transparency in Government by disclosing information to the public, we invite public comment on these permit applications before final action is taken. Under the MMPA, you may request a hearing on any MMPA application received. If you request a hearing, give specific reasons why a hearing would be appropriate. The holding of such a hearing is at the discretion of the Service Director.

III. Permit Applications

A. Endangered Species

Applicant: Duke University, Durham, NC; PRT-92458B

The applicant requests a permit to import biological samples from wild kakapo (*strigops habroptilus*) for the purpose of scientific research. This notification covers activities to be conducted by the applicant over a 2-year period.

Multiple Applicants

The following applicants each request a permit to import the sport-hunted trophy of one male bontebok (*Damaliscus pygargus pygargus*) culled from a captive herd maintained under the management program of the Republic of South Africa, for the purpose of enhancement of the survival of the species.

Applicant: Edwin Andrew, Frederica, DE; PRT-00500C

Applicant: Guy Maranga, Neponsit, NY; PRT-98444B

Applicant: Donald Bitz, West Palm Beach, FL; PRT-00209C

Applicant: Christopher Sibert, Midland, TX; PRT-98815B

B. Endangered Marine Mammals and Marine Mammals

Applicant: University of California, Santa Cruz, CA; PRT-83954B

The applicant requests a permit to import blood and tissue samples collected from wild polar bears in Manitoba, Canada, for purposes of scientific research. The goal of this study is to create an improved reference genome for polar bears (*Ursus maritimus*) and investigate the genetic diversity and unique adaptations of polar bears. Samples to be imported have been collected under Manitoba Wildlife Research permits for a study assessing the status of the wild population for conservation and ecological purposes. This notification covers activities to be conducted by the applicant over a 5-year period.

Applicant: Passion Planet, London, UK; PRT-01370C

The applicant requests a permit for Level B Harassment of northern sea otters (*Enhydra lutris kenyoni*) and southern sea otters (*Enhydra lutris nereis*) for purposes of photography for educational and commercial purposes. Filming will occur along the Washington State and California State coastlines. The filming is part of a documentary explaining the importance of sea otters to marine ecosystems. This notification covers activities to be conducted by the applicant over a 2-year period.

Concurrent with publishing this notice in the **Federal Register**, we are forwarding copies of the above applications to the Marine Mammal Commission and the Committee of Scientific Advisors for their review.

Brenda Tapia,
Program Analyst/Data Administrator,
Branch of Permits, Division of Management Authority.
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